

# Hope Church Holywell – Safeguarding Policy and Guidance

## 1. Introduction

Hope Church Holywell is committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment where all people—especially children, young people, and adults at risk—can encounter the love of God and grow in faith without fear or harm. Safeguarding is a spiritual, legal, and pastoral responsibility, rooted in our calling to reflect Christ’s care and compassion.

This document outlines our safeguarding policy, trustee commitments, volunteer guidance, and public statement. It reflects our compliance with UK law and our desire to foster emotional safety and spiritual integrity in every setting.

## 2. Legal Framework

We adhere to:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding for charities
- GDPR and data protection legislation

## 3. Safeguarding Principles

We affirm:

- The dignity and worth of every person
- The right to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm
- The importance of listening well, responding gently, and acting wisely
- The need for clear boundaries, accountability, and transparency in all ministry settings

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Safeguarding Lead:** A named individual responsible for overseeing safeguarding, receiving concerns, and liaising with statutory agencies.
- **Trustees:** Ensure safeguarding is embedded in governance, risk management, and decision-making.
- **Volunteers and Leaders:** Must follow safeguarding procedures, attend training, and report concerns promptly.

#### 5. Trustee Commitments

Trustees accept collective responsibility for safeguarding and commit to:

- Appointing a Safeguarding Lead
- Ensuring safe recruitment, DBS checks, and safeguarding training
- Reviewing safeguarding annually and updating in line with legal changes
- Responding to concerns with compassion and appropriate referral
- Providing trauma-informed pastoral care and signposting to professional support

This policy forms part of our compliance with Charity Commission guidance and will be reviewed annually.

#### 6. Volunteer Induction Guidance

As a volunteer, you play a vital role in helping us protect children, young people, and adults who may be vulnerable. Here's what you need to know:

- We follow UK law and Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- Our Safeguarding Lead is your first point of contact for any concerns
- You'll receive safeguarding training and guidance for your role
- Always report concerns—no matter how small—to the Safeguarding Lead
- Respect confidentiality, but never promise secrecy
- Be mindful of boundaries, tone, and safe communication—especially online
- If someone shares something difficult, listen gently and let them know help is available

Thank you for helping us create a church where people feel safe, seen, and supported.

## **7. Responding to Concerns**

We will:

- Take all concerns seriously, including disclosures, observations, and suspicions
- Respond with compassion, clarity, and appropriate action
- Record concerns securely and share information only on a need-to-know basis
- Refer to statutory agencies when necessary, following Wales Safeguarding Procedures

## **8. Pastoral Care and Support**

We seek to:

- Offer trauma-informed, spiritually sensitive care to those affected by abuse
- Signpost to professional support, including counselling and therapy
- Create emotionally safe spaces for sharing, prayer, and healing

## **9. Online Safety**

We will:

- Protect children and adults at risk in digital ministry settings
- Use secure platforms, obtain consent, and model respectful communication
- Monitor online interactions and respond to concerns appropriately

## **10. Review and Accountability**

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually by trustees and the safeguarding lead
- Updated in response to legal changes, best practice, or local needs
- Made available to all team members and church participants

## **11. Public Safeguarding Statement**

Hope Church Holywell is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk. We aim to create a safe, nurturing environment where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and care.

We follow UK law and Wales Safeguarding Procedures, and we appoint a Safeguarding Lead to oversee all concerns and ensure appropriate action is taken. All staff and volunteers are safely recruited and receive regular safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

We are dedicated to maintaining best practice in safeguarding, fostering a culture of vigilance, transparency, and compassion. If you have any concerns or questions, please speak to our Safeguarding Lead or a member of the leadership team.